Constitution of the Grand Commandery

OF

KNIGHTS TEMPLARS AND APPENDANT ORDERS

OF MASSACHUSETTS AND RHODE ISLAND.

ARTICLE I. — GRAND COMMANDERY.

STYLE AND TITLE.

SECTION 1. — The style and title of this Body is "The Grand Commandery of Knights Templars and the Appendant Orders of Massachusetts and Rhode Island."

JURISDICTION.

SECT. 2. — Its jurisdiction extends over the territorial limits of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

POWERS.

SECT. 3. — In it alone is vested the right and duty, which it cannot delegate, to superintend and govern all Commanderies of Knights Templars and the Appendant Orders within this jurisdiction.

It has exclusive power to grant dispensations and warrants for forming and opening Commanderies of the above Orders, and to extend or revoke the same.

It enacts statutes and issues edicts, and amends and repeals the same.

It censures, suspends, and erases Councils and Commanderies, and holds any of their members amenable for any violation or neglect of its statutes and edicts.

It has supreme authority, throughout this jurisdiction, in all matters pertaining to Templar Masonry, subject only to the ancient landmarks of the Order and the Grand Encampment of the United States.

MEMBERS.

SECT. 4. — It shall consist of a Grand Commander, Deputy Grand Commander, Grand Generalissimo, Grand Captain-General, Grand Prelate, Senior Grand Warden, Junior Grand Warden, Grand Treasurer, Grand Recorder, Grand Sword-Bearer, Grand Standard-Bearer, Grand Warder, Grand Captain of the Guards, Grand Sentinel, — *ex officiis;* of all Past Grand Commanders, and Grand Masters, Past Deputy Grand Commanders, and Deputy Grand Masters, Past Grand Generalissimos, and Past Grand Captains-General of this Body; of the Commanders, Generalissimos, and Captains-General, for the time being, of all subordinate Commanderies under this jurisdiction; and of all Past Commanders of such subordinates, so long as they are

members of Commanderies, under this jurisdiction, in good standing.

The above named present and past Officers (the Grand Sentinel excepted), and Representatives and Past Commanders of subordinate Commanderies, are the only voters in this Grand Commandery.

A permanent member has but one vote in his own right as such, and but two in any case.

ATTENDANCE AND PROXIES.

SECT. 5. — Each of the officers named in the preceding section, save and except Past Commanders and the Grand Sentinel, being unable to attend the Assemblies in person, shall have the power to appoint a proxy, who shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of his constituent, except that of taking his rank in Grand Commandery.

Such proxy must, at the time of his service, be a member of *the same subordinate Commandery as his principal,* and a Templar of not less than three years' standing, and must present a properly authenticated certificate of his appointment.

OFFICERS, ELECTION, AND TITLES.

SECT. 6. — The first nine officers shall be chosen by written ballot; the others, by appointment of the Grand Commander.

No Knight is eligible to any office in this Grand

Commandery, unless he be a member of some subordinate Commandery, and a Templar of not less than three years' standing.

The officers thus chosen shall serve until their successors have been installed. The title of the Grand Commander is "RIGHT EMINENT"; that of Deputy Grand Commander, "VERY EMINENT"; of the other Grand Officers, "EMINENT."

ASSEMBLIES.

SECT. 7. — This Grand Commandery shall assemble in October and May of each year, at such time and place as the presiding officer shall appoint, — in October, for the election of officers and the transaction of the annual business; and in May, for the exemplification of the work and ritual, the transaction of such special business as shall be presented, and the consideration of such matters as pertain to the general good of the Order.

Special Assemblies may be held at the pleasure of the presiding officer; but no business shall be transacted at a special meeting, save that which was specified in the original notice.

PREROGATIVES AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

SECT. 8. — The Grand Commander shall have a watchful supervision over all the Subordinate Commanderies, and see that all the constitutional enactments

rules and edicts of the Grand Encampment of the United States, and of this Grand Commandery, are duly and promptly obeyed.

The Grand Commander and Deputy Grand Commander, at their pleasure, visit and preside in any subordinate Commandery, and give such instruction and direction in the work and ritual as the good of the Order may require; always conforming to the ancient landmarks and this Grand Constitution. The Deputy Grand Commander, in the event of the death, removal or physical incompetency of his superior, shall act as the Grand Commander.

It is the duty of the Grand Commander, in person or by one of his Council, to visit and examine every subordinate Commandery under dispensation once in three months, and every chartered Commandery annually, and cause a report of the same to be made at the Annual Assembly of this Grand Commandery.

It is the duty of the Grand Treasurer to report to the Grand Commander or presiding officer, whenever and as often as there shall be a surplus of one hundred dollars in the treasury, not subject to any appropriation already made; and to invest the same by and with the advice of the first two officers.

It is the duty of the Grand Recorder, annually, to communicate to the Grand Recorders of all State Grand Commanderies, and to the Grand Recorder of the Grand Encampment of the United States of America, a list of

all the Grand Officers of this Grand Commandery, and all such other matters as the Right Eminent Grand Commander shall deem to be for the general good of the Order, or useful for their information.

The other duties of the above officers, and the duties of the other officers, are such as are traditionally appropriate to their offices, and such as may be required of them by this Grand Commandery and the Grand Commander.

NEW COMMANDERIES.

SECT. 9. — Dispensations for forming and opening new Commanderies, upon the petition of not less than nine Knights Templars residing within the jurisdiction, may be issued by the Grand Commander during recess of the Grand Commandery only, — Dispensations so issued to be of force only until the succeeding stated Assembly of this Body, unless continued by vote thereof; *provided, however*, that no Dispensation shall be issued without the consent of the Commandery nearest to the place where the new one is to be located; and, if in that town or city there is more than one, the consent of all shall be obtained.

Charters shall be granted by vote of the Grand Commandery alone, and at a stated Assembly.

A Commandery formed within this jurisdiction, without a Dispensation or Charter, as above provided, shall

be deemed illegal; and all communication between Commanderies under this jurisdiction, and the members of such illegal ones, is hereby strictly forbidden.

FEES FOR DISPENSATIONS AND CHARTERS.

SECT. 10. — The fees for a Dispensation are forty dollars to the Grand Commandery, and three dollars to the Grand Recorder; and, for a Charter, sixty dollars to the Grand Commandery, and seven dollars to the Grand Recorder; and, for a Charter without a previous Dispensation, one hundred dollars to the Grand Commandery, and ten dollars to the Grand Recorder. In no case shall a Dispensation or Charter be issued, until the required fees shall have been paid to the Grand Treasurer.

GRAND FUND.

SECT. 11. — One tenth of the unincumbered funds of this Body, at its Annual Assembly in October, 1859, and one tenth of its present and future income, shall be set apart, and shall form a "Grand Fund"; the interest only of which shall be expended, for charitable and other purposes, at the discretion of this Grand Body: *provided, however*, that no portion of the interest shall be expended for any purpose whatever, until the principal shall amount to five thousand dollars. The unexpended income of the fund, and all donations to the same, shall

be annually added to the principal. Until this fund shall amount to five thousand dollars, it shall not be in knightly faith to diminish the rate of increase as provided above.

The Grand Commander, Grand Treasurer, and Grand Recorder, shall be a Committee, to be styled "The Grand Fund Committee," whose duty it shall be to attend to the safe and profitable investment of this fund. They shall also make a detailed report, in writing, of its condition at each and every Annual Assembly in October. A failure so to do shall render them ineligible to re-election for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE II. — SUBORDINATE COMMANDERIES.

MEMBERS.

SECTION 1. — Every subordinate Commandery shall consist of a Commander, Generalissimo, Captain-General, Prelate, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Treasurer, Recorder, Sword-Bearer, Standard-Bearer, and Warder, and such other officers and members as may be found convenient.

ASSEMBLIES.

SECT. 2. — Every subordinate Commandery shall

assemble at least quarterly for improvement and business.

JURISDICTION.

SECT. 3. — Every subordinate Commandery shall have exclusive jurisdiction in receiving applications for and conferring the Orders of Knighthood, over all territory lying nearer the usual travelled routes to its place of meeting than to that of any other Commandery; *provided*, that any Commandery may waive this jurisdiction in favor of any person desirous to apply to any other Commandery.

OFFICERS: ELECTION AND DUTIES.

SECT. 4. — The first eight officers shall be elected by written ballot: the others may be appointed by the Commander at the pleasure of the Commandery. The officers thus chosen shall serve until their successors shall have been installed. The title of the Commander is "EMINENT." The Commander of a subordinate Commandery has it in special charge to see that the By-Laws of his Commandery and this Grand Constitution are duly observed; that accurate records are kept, and just accounts rendered; that regular returns to this Grand Commandery are made annually; and that the annual dues are promptly paid. He calls special Assemblies of his Commandery at pleasure; and it is his duty, with his Generalissimo and Captain-General, to attend all Assemblies of this Grand Commandery.

The duties of the other officers are such as are traditionally appropriate, and such as may be assigned them by the Commandery or the Commander.

OBLIGATION.

SECT. 5. — The officers of every subordinate Commandery before installation, and every candidate upon admission, shall take the following obligation, viz: "I, —— ——, do promise and vow that I will support and maintain the Constitution of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templars and the Appendant Orders of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and the Constitution of the Grand Encampment of the United States of America."

ANNUAL RETURNS.

SECT. 6. — Every subordinate Commandery shall make a return to the Grand Recorder of this Grand Commandery, on or before the tenth day of October, annually, of the roll of its officers and members, of all candidates for the Orders, accepted or rejected; and shall pay to this Grand Commandery five dollars for every Knight created, and an annual fee of three dollars.

ORDERS, FEES, AND RULE OF SUCCESSION.

SECT. 7. — No subordinate Commandery shall confer the Orders of Knighthood for a less sum than thirty

dollars, nor on any person who shall not have regularly received the several Degrees of E. A., F. C., M. M., M. M. M., P. M., M. E. M., and R. A. M.; and no candidate for the Orders shall be balloted for, unless he shall have stood proposed at least fourteen days, unless a Dispensation therefor shall be obtained from the R. E. Grand Commander. The Orders shall be conferred in the following succession, viz: — 1. KNIGHT OF THE RED CROSS; 2. KNIGHT TEMPLAR; 3. KNIGHT OF MALTA.

SOJOURNERS.

SECT. 8. — It is not regular for a subordinate Commandery to confer the Orders of Knighthood upon any sojourner from any State or place in which there is a Commandery regularly established, except by consent of the Commandery having jurisdiction. Any Commandery which violates this regulation shall be subject to knightly discipline, and be required to pay, on demand, to the Commandery having jurisdiction, the amount of fees received.

Any Commandery may, however, take cognizance of the conduct of sojourning Knights.

QUESTIONS.

SECT. 9. — In every Assembly of Knights, all questions, except of the admission of candidates and members, and of matters specially reserved by the By-

Laws, shall be decided by a majority vote, — the presiding officer, if a member, being entitled to one vote, and, in case of a tie, to the casting vote.

COSTUME.

SECT. 10. — The costume of this Grand Commandery and its subordinates is such as is, from time to time, approved by this Grand Body.

OPENING AND CLOSING.

SECT. 11. — All Councils and Commanderies should be opened and closed in due and ancient form; and Commanderies with devotion.

AMENDMENTS.

SECT. 12. — This Grand Constitution may be altered or amended by vote of two-thirds of the members present at any Annual Assembly in October.

At the annual assembly held in the City of Providence, on Friday, the 29th day of October, 1869, the foregoing Constitution was adopted, and is now binding upon the Grand Commandery of Knights Templars and Appendant Orders of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and all subordinate Commanderies within its jurisdiction.

ALFRED F. CHAPMAN,
Grand Recorder.

Boston, November 9, 1869.